

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 2-6 and 8-14 are pending herein. Claims 2, 3, 8 and 9 have been rewritten in independent form, and claims 1 and 7 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 4, 5, 10 and 11 have been amended to correct matters of form, claim 6 has been amended to depend from rewritten claim 2, and claim 12 has been rewritten to depend from rewritten claim 8. New claim 13 has been added to recite the features of claim 6 depending from rewritten independent claim 3, and new claim 14 has been added to recite the features of claim 12 depending from rewritten independent claim 9. Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter has been added.

1. Applicants appreciate the PTO indicating that claims 2, 3, 8 and 9 would be allowed if rewritten in independent form, and that claims 4, 5, 10 and 11 would be allowed if rewritten in independent form and to overcome the §112, second paragraph rejection discussed below. Applicants respectfully submit that these claims have been so rewritten. In addition to claims 2-5 and 8-11, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims pending herein are in condition for allowance, and respectfully request that the PTO issue a Notice of Allowance for this application in due course.
2. The §112, second paragraph rejection of claims 4, 5, 10 and 11 is noted, but deemed moot in view of the rewritten claims submitted above. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the above rejection be reconsidered and withdrawn.
3. Applicants appreciate the suggestions offered by the PTO with respect to clarifying claim 7. Applicants respectfully submit that the features of claim 7, which are now recited in rewritten independent claims 8 and 9, include clarifying changes that are consistent with the suggestions made by the PTO.

4. The §102(e) rejections of claims 1, 6, 7 and 12 over Takahashi '947 and separately over Takahashi '595, and the §103(a) rejection of claims 1 and 7 over Kitahara in view of Takeuchi '942 and Takeuchi '893 are noted, but deemed moot in view of the cancellation of claims 1 and 7, and further in view of the rewritten claims submitted above. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the above rejections be reconsidered and withdrawn.

If the Examiner believes that contact with Applicants' attorney would be advantageous toward the disposition of this case, the Examiner is herein requested to call Applicants' attorney at the phone number noted below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees associated with this communication or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-1446.

Respectfully submitted,

February 27, 2007

Date



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